

NCA
VOC FOR 10P/FN
NEWS ANALYSIS NO. 1-1540
JOSEPH SULLIVAN

SEPTEMBER 30, 1976

CURBING TERRORISM: THE WEST GERMAN FORMULA

ANNCR:

WEST GERMANY THIS WEEK OFFERED THE UNITED NATIONS A PLAN FOR TAKING A FIRST STEP AGAINST INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM. VOA NEWS ANALYST JOSEPH SULLIVAN HAS THESE OBSERVATIONS.

VOICE:

THE GERMAN PROPOSAL WAS PRESENTED TUESDAY (SEPTEMBER 28) BY FOREIGN MINISTER HANS-DIETRICH GENSCHER IN HIS ADDRESS BEFORE THE U.N. GENERAL ASSEMBLY. MINISTER GENSCHER CALLED UPON THE WORLD BODY TO DRAFT A CONVENTION TO BAN THE TAKING OF HOSTAGES AND ASSURING THAT THOSE WHO VIOLATE IT ARE EITHER EXTRADITED OR BROUGHT TO TRIAL IN THE COUNTRY WHERE THEY ARE APPREHENDED.

(OPT) THE WEST GERMAN PLAN FOR CURBING TERRORIST ACTS WAS NOT UNEXPECTED, FOR THE BONN GOVERNMENT SAID BEFORE THE CONCLUSION OF THE LAST GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION THAT IT WOULD PRESENT THE PROPOSAL AT THE NEXT U.N. MEETING. IT WAS ALSO ON THE AGENDA OF A MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE CALLED EARLIER THIS MONTH TO CONSIDER A DRAFT TREATY TO COMBAT TERRORISM. PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANT IS THE PROPOSAL'S TIMING. IT COMES AFTER A YEAR OF SPORADIC TERRORIST VIOLENCE HIGHLIGHTED BY THE ENTEDDE AIRPORT RAID IN JULY. (END OPT)

TERRORIST ACTS HAVE TAKEN NEW FORMS OF VIOLENCE OVER THE YEARS. AND CERTAINLY ONE OF THE MOST INHUMANE OF THESE IS THE TAKING OF HOSTAGES. AT THE SAME TIME, THE PROBLEM OF ACHIEVING INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT ON THE CONTROL OF TERRORISM HAS BEEN COMPLICATED BY THE FACT THAT IT IS A BROAD AND POLITICALLY ENCUMBERED SUBJECT. INDEED, AS IS SO OFTEN

POINTED OUT, ONE MAN'S TERRORIST IS ANOTHER MAN'S FREEDOM FIGHTER. THUS IT IS THAT THE WEST GERMAN GOVERNMENT CHOSE TO NARROW THE FOCUS OF ITS PROPOSAL TO ONE ISSUE -- THE TAKING OF HOSTAGES. MISTER GENSCHER ALSO REFRAINED FROM USING THE WORD "TERRORISM", PRESUMABLY TO MEET THE OBJECTIONS OF THE AFRICAN AND ARAB STATES WHO ARGUE THAT THE WORD WRONGLY INCLUDES WHAT THEY CALL THE LEGITIMATE TACTICS OF NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS.

THE WEST GERMAN PLAN SEEMS CERTAIN TO RECEIVE WIDESPREAD BACKING. THE UNITED STATES -- WHICH IN THE LAST GENERAL ASSEMBLY CO-SPONSORED A RESOLUTION CONDEMNING TERRORIST ACTS -- HAS ALREADY GIVEN ITS APPROVAL. THE WHITE HOUSE SAYS PRESIDENT FORD HAS TOLD FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD GIVE THE PROPOSED CONVENTION ITS STRONG SUPPORT.

FOR SOME TIME, WASHINGTON HAS URGED THE ADOPTION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION AGAINST TERRORISM AND HAS REPEATEDLY CALLED -- BOTH IN THE U.N. AND IN OTHER FORUMS -- FOR EFFECTIVE INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO COMBAT TERRORIST ACTS. THE UNITED STATES BELIEVE- THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO AVERT THE EXPORT OF VIOLENCE TO OTHER COUNTRIES WITHOUT GETTING INVOLVED IN POLITICAL ISSUES. AND U.S. OFFICIALS HAVE EMPHASIZED THAT ONLY WHEN THE HIJACKER KNOWS HE WILL BE EXTRADICTED TO THE COUNTRY WHERE HE COMMITTED HIS CRIME OR PROSECUTED IN THE COUNTRY IN WHICH HE LANDS WILL HE CEASE TO BE A PROBLEM.

ALTHOUGH LEGAL AND PRACTICAL APPROACHES TO THE CONTROL OF TERRORISM HAVE BEEN TAKEN BY VARIOUS GOVERNMENTS, THE WORLD COMMUNITY AT LARGE CLEARLY HAS MADE LITTLE PROGRESS ALONG EITHER ROAD. AND, CERTAINLY NO ONE CAN TAKE COMFORT FROM THE FACT THAT THE TERRORISM DEBATE AT THE UNITED NATIONS HAS BEEN STALLED FOR

THE PAST FOUR YEARS. THE WEST GERMAN PLAN SEEKS TO BREAK THAT IMPASSE. AND, IF NOTHING MORE, IT POINTS UP THE NEED FOR UNIVERSALLY ACCEPTED PRINCIPLES TO DEAL WITH WHAT FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER, IN HIS ADDRESS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, CALLED NOT ONLY AN OFFENSE AGAINST INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS BUT A THREAT TO INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

GH/RCS